

The Briefing



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Kids and idolatry: a spot I had to do at church

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For some reason, I've been asked to do a regular 'culture watch' segment for the kids' spots at the beginning of church.

I'm not sure I even believe in watching the culture, but someone clearly did at some stage in the history of our kids' talks, so here we are with me doing a 'culture watch' spot. My basic strategy has been to work on a topic or passage from the Bible, and find a YouTube clip with the faintest of connections to something that may possibly illustrate the bit of Bible I want to talk about, but is at least funny in a ha-ha kind of way.

Which is marginally better—I put it to you—than most 'culture watch' things I see from Christians, which consist of finding and watching an MA rated movie, and then finding the most tenuous of threads to link it to a potentially Biblical topic like fatherhood, motherhood, or apple pie.

Hey, I'm not saying my kids' talks are brilliant, whereas others efforts are poor. My kids' talks are just OK, serviceable enough for a 3-5 minute segment, about once every three to four months at the beginning of church, and then only if you also miss the weeks where there is a full moon.

I am simply saying that it's better to have a talk about the Bible pretending to be about culture, than a talk about the culture pretending to be about the Bible.

Anyway, for this talk, should you choose to plagiarize it for your own (permission granted), you will need in this order:

1. This YouTube clip:

2. A bag with three items in it: a piece of sporting equipment, a cool electronic gadget, and (to be pulled out last of all) a big mirror.
3. A PowerPoint slide with these words: Christians are people who have “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and wait for his Son from heaven” ([1 Thess 1:9-10](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess%201.9-10) (<https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess%201.9-10>)).
4. A PowerPoint slide with these words: Dear Lord Jesus. We are sorry that we sometimes serve idols instead of you. Please forgive us and change us, so that we will serve you only. Amen.

Then you use a script not unlike this:

Welcome to our kids’ spot, which this week is a ‘culture watch’ spot.

A ‘culture watch’ spot means I try to find something on YouTube, then we watch it, then we talk about it.

But before we watch something on YouTube I need to ask you a question.

Who knows what an idol is?

Lots of great answers there. Here's my answer: an idol is any good thing that you put in place of God.

Okay, now I need you to work something out for me.

The dog in this YouTube clip has an idol, and I need you to work out what the idol is.

[Youtube clip: Ultimate dog tease]

Did you work out what the idol was? Food is the right answer.

I've got some idols in my bag.

[In the bag is a netball, an iPod, and a mirror. They are pulled out in any order, as long as the mirror comes out last. You can let children pull the idols out of the bag. In each case, you talk about how great the thing is—sport, computer games—before reminding people that it's not good if it becomes more important than God.]

Last and most of all, the biggest idol is (showing the mirror) me! Or possibly you! God made us good, but we do the wrong thing when we say that we are more important than God, or that the things we want are more important than God. Even we can become idols!

Did you know a Christian is someone who turns away from idols to serve the living and true God? I've got a Bible verse about that which is going to come up on the screen.

Powerpoint 1: Christians are people who have “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and wait for his Son from heaven” ([1 Thess 1:9-10](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess%201.9-10) (<https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess%201.9-10>))

One of the things we love to do is pray to God that he would forgive us and change us. I've got a prayer for us that we can pray.

Powerpoint 2: Dear Lord Jesus. We are sorry that we sometimes serve idols instead of you. Please forgive us and change us, so that we will serve you only. Amen.

So there you have it, a 'culture watch' spot on kids and idolatry. Feel free to comment on this post and suggest improvements!

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